

# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

SECTION: COMMUNITY  
TITLE: Public Complaints  
ADOPTED: April 27, 1981  
REVISED:

## 906 PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

### **Purpose**

Any resident or community group shall have the right to present a request, suggestion or complaint concerning district personnel, the program, or the operations of the district. At the same time, the Board has a duty to protect its staff from unnecessary harassment. It is the intent of this policy to provide a fair and impartial manner for seeking appropriate remedies.

### **Authority**

Any misunderstandings between the public and the school district shall be resolved by direct discussions of an informal type among the interest parties. It is only when such informal meetings fail to resolve the differences that more formal procedures will be employed.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

Any requests, suggestions or complaints reaching Board members and the Board shall be referred to the Superintendent for consideration and action. In the event that further action is warranted, based on the initial investigation, such action shall be in accordance with the following procedures.

#### *A. Matters Regarding a Teaching Staff Member*

*First Level* - a matter specifically directed toward a teaching staff member shall be addressed, initially, to the concerned staff member who shall discuss it with the complainant and make every effort to provide a reasoned explanation or take appropriate action within his/her authority. As appropriate, the staff member shall report the matter, and whatever action may have been taken, to the building principal.

*Second Level* - If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the first level, it shall be discussed by the complainant with the building principal.

*Third Level* - If a satisfactory solution is not achieved by discussion with the building principal, the principal shall attempt to schedule a conference with the Superintendent. The principal will furnish to the Superintendent a report which will include the specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of the facts giving rise to it; the respect in which it is alleged that the complainant (or child of the complainant) has been affected adversely; and the action which the complainant wishes taken and the reasons why it is felt that such action be taken.

*Fourth Level* - Should the matter still not be resolved by the Superintendent, or if it is beyond the Superintendent's authority and requires Board action, the Superintendent shall furnish the Board with a complete report.

The Board, after reviewing all material relating to the case, shall provide the complainant with its written decision. The complainant shall be advised of the Board's decision no more than ten (10) days following the hearing.

*B. Matters Regarding an Administrative Staff Member*

In the case of a complaint directed toward an administrative staff member, the general procedure specified in Part A, shall be followed. The complaint shall be discussed, initially, with the person toward whom it is directed and if a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this level, the matter shall be brought, as required, to higher levels in accordance with the organization chart of the school district, terminating with the Board of Education.

*C. Matters Regarding a Noninstructional Staff Member*

In the case of a complaint directed toward a non-instructional staff member, the complaint is to be directed, initially, toward the person's superior, and the matter then brought, as required, to higher levels in accordance with the organization chart of the district in the manner described in Part A.

*D. Matters Regarding a Program, Operation or Instructional Materials*

A request, suggestion, or complaint, relating to a matter of district or school policy, procedure, program, operation, or instructional materials, should be addressed initially, to the principal or the head of the noninstructional department who is most directly concerned; and then brought, in turn, to higher levels of authority in the manner prescribed in Part A.

*E. Matters regarding Pupil Progress and Well-Being*

In the case of a complaint directed toward this area, the general procedures specified in part A shall be followed.

**Legal References:**

- 1.State School Code Section 13.31 et seq